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Book draws interest of CIA chief

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A book about the 1983 Soviet attack on a Korean Air Lines jet has piqued the interest of CIA Director William Casey, who made two calls to suggest that the work contained material that violated federal law, according to Random House, its publisher.

Random House, which will release Seymour M. Hersh's *The Target Is Destroyed* in September, also was called by the top-secret National Security Agency (NSA). The agency was seeking copies of the book's galleys, said Random House chairman Robert L. Bernstein.

"I am puzzled and disturbed by what is happening," Bernstein said Wednesday.

"It is especially disturbing that Mr. Casey, who is an attorney and head of one of the most powerful agencies in government, would call our editor and exaggerate the reach of the law that he said he must uphold."

Casey also called Bob Woodward, an assistant managing editor of the Washington Post, the paper said in an article yesterday. Woodward is writing a book about Casey and the CIA to be published by Simon & Schuster.

Woodward, who was contacted by Casey June 19, said he took the call about his book as a "friendly warning," and considered it more in the nature of "negotiation, not intimidation."

"It's not clear territory, and I've talked to [Casey] about it," Woodward said.

Referring to Casey's call about his book on the airliner attack, Hersh told United Press International: "I am proceeding very consistently and with long-held traditional rights. I love my country as much as anyone else, including William Casey."

Random House's Bernstein said, "The company has done everything possible, short of submitting the book to the government for censorship, to assure that we are acting both lawfully and responsibly in publishing Mr. Hersh's book."

He said he was convinced that the calls from the NSA and Casey about Hersh's book had been linked.

"Although Mr. Casey and other government officials may be embarrassed by Mr. Hersh's book, I am satisfied its publication is in the national interest and is entirely lawful," he said.

A CIA spokesman would not confirm or deny that Casey made the calls.

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